



PROJECT ACCESS FACT SHEET #31



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CONSIDERING AN IDAC (In-District Autism Consultant) FOR YOUR SCHOOL?

Many Missouri School Districts have benefitted from having an In-District Autism Consultant trained through Project ACCESS. These individuals are chosen by district administration among those teachers and therapists who have completed the Project ACCESS trainings, *Introduction to the Education of Students with Autism* and either *Working with Students with Autism in the Schools (WASS)* or *Early Intervention for Young Students with Autism (EIYCA)*. The IDAC training typically involves two and one half days of training and, unlike the first two trainings which focus on the nature of autism and implementation of strategies, involves learning to collaborate with and lead others within the district who are supporting students with autism.

As an administrator of a Missouri School District, it is helpful to consider asking the following questions when designating a teacher/therapist to become trained as an IDAC.

- Does my designee have a good basic foundation in autism and has this person completed the Introduction and either the WASS or EIYCA workshops?
- Is my designee a person who garners respect from co-workers and does he or she have skills that would lead to successful collaboration with staff members?
- Is my designee an experienced teacher/therapist? Is my designee a leader? Is he or she responsive and flexible?
- Will there be a way to provide some release time for this person to collaborate with staff to assist in supporting students with autism? Some districts have developed a regular schedule and others have scheduled on an as-needed basis. Successful use of an IDACs skills involves on-going administrative support.
- Can my designee be accountable to demonstrate confidentiality as he or she works with teachers with a variety of backgrounds and skill levels in the area of autism? In other words, can this person refrain from complaining or gossiping about others abilities or attitudes?

- Is my designee able to identify and ask for additional assistance when needed? Project ACCESS is a referral source, and there are many other referral sources available in this rapidly growing area.
- Will my designee take advantage of advanced learning opportunities when offered by Project ACCESS or other sources? Is he or she a lifelong learner?

We hope those in administrative positions will consider providing an IDAC to support staff who are working with students with autism. A well-trained, collaborative IDAC can be key to successfully providing services for students with autism.

When a designee is chosen, a letter of support from an administrator is required and then the designee will enroll in the IDAC training on-line through our website

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